

6.

u
s,
h
is
ly
e,
of
y
e
d
y
e
-
s
e
t
y

THE

Saturday Magazine.

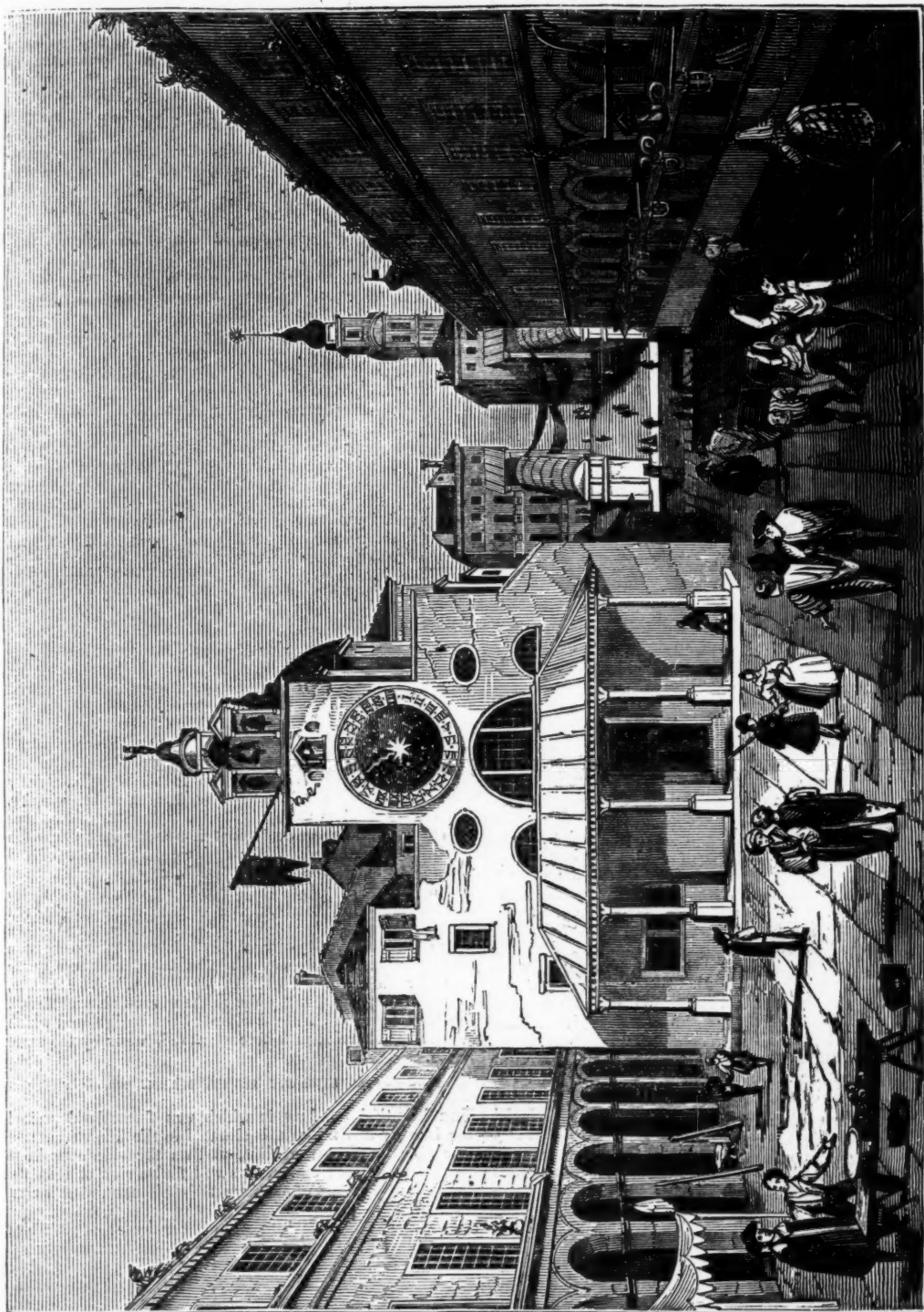
Nº 262. SUPPLEMENT,

JULY, 1836.

PRICE
ONE PENNY.



UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF GENERAL LITERATURE AND EDUCATION
APPOINTED BY THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.



THE EXCHANGE OF VENICE, AND THE APPROACH TO THE BRIDGE OF THE RIALTO,
AS THEY APPEARED IN THE LAST CENTURY.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE CITY OF VENICE. II.

THE CHURCH OF IL REDENTORE.

BESIDES the Cathedral of St. Mark, already described* in our former Supplement, Venice is said to contain about one hundred and twenty churches, more than ninety of which are situated within the city itself, (thirty of them being parochial,) the rest being scattered on the contiguous islands†. It would far exceed our limits, even to give a slight sketch of the principal of these edifices; they are all worthy of the notice of the traveller, not only for the architectural beauties, but also for the treasures of art, of which, in most instances, they boast. We content ourselves with naming the church of *Santa Maria della Salute*, (which may be seen in the Engraving, p. 48), the church of *San Giorgio Maggiore*, which was erected from the designs of Palladio, and which stands on an island opposite the Piazzetta, and, lastly, the church of *Il Santissimo Redentore*, or the most Holy Redeemer, to which, as the master-piece of the same architect, we shall refer more particularly.

Its origin is to be ascribed to the same feeling of devotion, from which many ecclesiastical edifices in other countries have taken their rise. In the year 1575 Venice was visited by a plague, which proved fatal to forty thousand of her citizens, and among them to the celebrated Titian. During the period of its ravages, the question which has in later years excited so much discussion among medical practitioners, was debated in the presence of the Signory by the Physicians of Padua and Venice; the former denying, and the latter asserting the doctrine of contagion. The Senate, little qualified to pronounce a scientific judgment, hesitated for a long time between the conflicting opinions, till the boldness of the Paduans, who fearlessly exposed themselves to all hazards in the chambers of the sick and dying, for a time prevailed. Four days, however, had scarcely passed after the relaxation of sanitary precautions, before the frightful disease spread rapidly through those districts of the city which had hitherto escaped its touch; yet, notwithstanding this calamitous practical rebutment of their principle, the death of one of their body, and the disgrace and dismissal of the rest, the non-contagionists so obstinately persisted in their first opinions, that there were those who wished to pursue them by legal penalties. Great as was the surrounding mortality, the magistrates remained undismayed at their respective posts; and, although not unfrequently some noble who had addressed the council in the morning, was borne from his palace a corpse at night, the assemblies of the senate were on no occasion intermitted. Terror was at its height, human aid was powerless, and hope had failed, when the Doge Mocenigo, after attending solemn service in St. Mark's, registered a vow, in the presence of as many citizens as the miserable state of the capital permitted to gather round him, to found and dedicate, in the name of the Republic, a Church in honour of the Redeemer, to endow it sumptuously, and to perform a yearly *andata* (or procession,) to it, on the return of the day on which Venice should become free from her present scourge. If we are to believe the native authorities, from that hour amendment commenced with a miraculous speed; for, although on the morning before the vow, two hundred deaths were announced to the council, four only were declared on that which succeeded. Before the close of the year the city was restored to health, and Palladio was engaged to erect on the island of the *Giudecca*, its noblest ornament, the Church of the *Redentore*.

Forsyth pronounces this church to be admirable, both in plan and in elevation. A critic in the *Quarterly Review*, terms it the most beautiful ecclesiastical building designed by Palladio, and, perhaps, altogether the most beautiful church in Italy, though inferior to many in costliness and magnitude. Its interior elevation is spoken of as simple-grand harmonious, perhaps perfect in its proportions; "one unbroken entablature surmounting one unwearied Corinthian reigns round the church." It was begun by Palladio in 1578, only two years before his death. It contains some fine pictures of Our Lord's Baptism, the Scourging, and the Descent from the Cross, by Tintoretto, Palma, and Paul Veronese.

* See *Sat. Mag.* Vol. VIII., p. 249. † *Ibid.*, Vol. VI. p. 146.

THE BRIDGE OF THE RIALTO.

"THERE is no spot," says Mr. Roscoe, "on which the European traveller can rest his foot, more fruitful in the most interesting of historical associations, than the noble bridge we are contemplating; and both the simple beauty of its broad span, the magnificent line of marble palaces which adorn the canal over which it is thrown, and its antiquity, render it in picturesque effect and moral and romantic interest, one of the grandest monuments of past ages."

The Bridge of the Rialto crosses the *Canalazo*, or Grand Canal, and is the only link of connexion between the two great divisions into which Venice is separated by that channel. It was commenced in 1587, and completed in 1591, having been erected in the place of an old wooden structure, which, during three centuries, had afforded the citizens the required means of communication; the architect was Antonio da Ponte, the same who raised so beautiful an edifice for the public prison.

This celebrated bridge, "the glory of Venice and the envy and admiration of strangers," consists of a single arch, the span of which is ninety-six feet ten inches; it is constructed of marble, but is said to be so coated with dirt, as scarcely to permit the material to be seen. The extreme breadth of the bridge is sixty-six feet, but it is divided into three distinct narrow streets, by a double row of mean shops, which are built upon it, to the number of twenty-four on each side. The form of the arch is elliptic, and, as it springs from very low banks, like the arches of other bridges in Venice, it rises, in the centre of its span, to the considerable height of twenty-one feet; and thus it is mounted and descended by long flights of steps. This bridge has generally excited the admiration of strangers; Evelyn tells us that the first public building which he went to see was "the Rialto, a bridge of one arch so large as to admit a galley to row under it, built of good marble, and having on it, besides many pretty shops, three ample and stately passages for people without any inconvenience; a piece of architecture much to be admired." Some later travellers have spoken of it in less flattering terms; and undoubtedly in Evelyn's days, as at the time of its erection, it was much more remarkable as a triumph of architectural skill than it can be now. The surmounting buildings have been objected to; they are said greatly to injure the elegance of the whole bridge, and to have the appearance of pressing heavily on the single elliptic arch. One modern tourist thinks it radically defective in every point of view, and has accordingly suggested that it would be far better to substitute "a cast-iron bridge from the furnaces of Rotherham."

There are some interesting associations attached to this bridge in the minds of most persons, though, strictly speaking, they have become linked with it by mistake. "When we stood on the Rialto," says the author of *Sketches of Italy*, "we remembered that it was the spot where the Christians 'flouted' Shylock; and we thought more of the 'Merchant of Venice' than of the beauty or singularity of the noble arch." Mr. Matthews observes, that "if no more were included under this name than the single arch across the canal, the congregation of merchants before whom Antonio used to rate Shylock, must have been a small one, and Pierre could not have well chosen a worse place for his evening's walk of meditation." The Rialto, however, to which Shakspeare refers was, in all probability, the Exchange, which stood close by the bridge, and which originally, as we have before observed, went by the same name.

LIBRARY OF ST. MARK.

THE beautiful building in which was formerly deposited the Library of St. Mark, is situated in the Piazzetta, in a line with the *Zecca*, or Mint, and on the side opposite to the Ducal Palace; our readers will find a view of it in the engraving in p. 253 of our former Supplement, as it is seen from that part of the Piazza which adjoins the north-west angle of the Ducal Palace, or that corner of it which approaches the Church of St. Mark. The foundation of it was laid by the Doge Tomaso Mocenigo, who reigned from 1413 to 1423, and who apportioned for its construction 4000 ducats yearly from the duties on salt: but the work

was often interrupted, and not renewed with activity till a century after his death. It was then completed as it now appears, by Sansovino, whose name is identified with the most magnificent buildings in Venice; it consists of two orders "as rich as beauty would allow them to be."

The Library itself is indebted for its origin to the liberality of Petrarch. In 1362, while the plague was raging at Padua, he had fixed his abode at Venice, which was free from infection; his books accompanied him, and for their conveyance he was obliged to retain a numerous and expensive stud of baggage-horses. The consideration and respect with which he was received upon this occasion, as he had been on former visits, appear to have produced upon his mind,—already profoundly impressed with the beauty and singularity of the "fairy city"—sentiments very favourable to her people; and on the 4th of September in that year, he addressed to the Great Council the following letter:—

"Francesco Petrarca desires to bequeath to St. Mark the Evangelist, the books which he now possesses, or which he shall in future possess. He would impose this condition only, that they should be neither sold, alienated, nor dispersed, and that some place, secure from water and fire, may be assigned for the preservation of the library, in memory of the donor, to the glory of the patron saint, and for the consolation of studious men, who may frequent it with pleasure and advantage. In forming this wish he does not forget that the books are neither very precious nor very numerous, but he indulges a hope that the collection may increase under the auspices of this glorious republic. The illustrious nobles, the patriotic citizens, and even strangers may in future enrich it by bestowing portions of their own collections, so that at length it may rival the most famous libraries of antiquity. The least enlightened persons will perceive that this monument will not be useless in forwarding the glory of their country; that he has laid the first foundations of the edifice will ever be a source of happiness to the donor."

The Council gladly accepted this liberal bequest, and addressed its thanks in terms of courtesy "to a scholar unrivalled in poetry, in Moral Philosophy, and in Theology." The collection was not extensive, but it contained many treasures of great value. Amongst them are enumerated a manuscript of Homer, presented to Petrarch by Nicolaus Sigeros, ambassador of the Greek emperor; a beautiful copy of Sophocles, given to him by Leontius Pilatus, the first Greek professor who taught that language in the western countries of Europe:—the entire *Iliad*, and great part of the *Odyssey* translated into Latin by the same scholar, and copied in the handwriting of Boccaccio, whom he had instructed in Greek;—an imperfect *Quintilian*;—and most of the works of Cicero transcribed by Petrarch himself, who professed an unbounded admiration for the great Roman philosopher.

About a century after the establishment of this library, it was largely increased by the munificence of Cardinal Bessarion, who, as patriarch of Constantinople, had possessed frequent opportunities of securing manuscripts of great rarity; he tells the senate in his letter, "that after the destruction of Constantinople, he had consumed his entire strength, care, power, and industry, in increasing his collection of the Greek writers; and that he had selected the city of Venice as the depository of his library, on account of its admirable government, the number of Greeks who frequented it, and the benefits which he had himself derived from that city." The library was subsequently enriched to a still further extent by other accessions; but the Venetians are charged with having grievously neglected it. When Tomasini, a learned Italian, requested permission to inspect the books in the early part of the seventeenth century, he was led to the roof of St. Mark's, where he found them, to use his own words, "partly reduced to dust, and wonderful to tell! partly petrified."

The celebrated antiquary Montfaucon visited this collection, but was prevented, by the jealousy of the Venetians, from examining the contents. "In this library," he observes, "there are none but manuscript books, most of them Greek, and presented by Cardinal Bessarion. Here was hope of a mighty harvest; but when we came the third time by appointment, the abbot told us that the Procurator Cornaro, who has the chief care of the library, upon an information given him by I know not what person, that had slipped into the library the day before, had forbade our being allowed to examine, much less to transcribe, thinking it for the honour of the republic and its library,

that so great a number of manuscripts should stand quietly on their shelves, and be of no manner of use, as if Cardinal Bessarion, who took so much care to find out those books, and bring them together from several parts of the world, had done it only to have them heaped up in a beautiful room, and there lie till they perish of age, or worms, or fire, as often happens."

The library at present contains about sixty thousand volumes, which were transferred in 1812 to the splendid saloon in the Ducal Palace, formerly appropriated for the assemblies of the Grand Council. The building in which they were formerly deposited is now a part of the Royal Palace.

THE CAMPANILE.

The *Campanile di San Marco*, the tower or belfry of St. Mark, whose position in the Piazza we described in our former number, is one of the characteristic objects of Venice. It is built of brick and is of quadrangular shape, its pretensions to architectural beauty being said to be very small. The foundations of this stupendous tower, which are described by Evelyn as "exceeding deepe," were laid in the reign of Pietro Tribuno, who filled the office of doge from the year 888 to 912; the body of it was not finished till the middle of the fourteenth century. Fifty years afterwards, during a night of illumination on some occasion of public rejoicing, the wooden turret which then crowned the Campanile caught fire and was destroyed. The doge, Antonio Veniero, in whose reign this accident occurred, quickly repaired it; he built the upper gallery of stone, added the pyramidal summit with which the tower is at present terminated, (see the engraving, Vol. VIII., p. 249.) and enriched the pinnacle with a profuse coating of gold.

The height of the Campanile is variously stated at from 300 to 330 feet; the ascent, according to the author of *Sketches of Italy*, is "by a triangular and very uneven pathway, occasionally broken into steps." Evelyn says "we climb'd up the toure of St. Mark, which we might have done on horseback, as 'tis said one of the French kings did, there being no stayres, or steps, but returns that take up an entire square on the arches, forty foote, broad enough for a coach." The bell is of great size, and to a person on the summit, the sound which it emits is almost deafening. "While we were there," says a writer already quoted, "the great bell began to ring just below us, giving such a vibration to the air, that I was ready to jump over the parapet to be relieved from the strange sensations it produced."

The view which is obtained from the summit of this tower is magnificent, and amply repays the toil of the ascent. "From hence," says Evelyn, "is a prospect down the Adriatic as far as Istria and the Dalmatian side, with the surprising sight of this miraculous city, which lies in the bosome of the sea, in the shape of a lute, and numberless islands tacked together by no fewer than 450 bridges." From this lofty elevation, indeed, the eye can distinctly trace every shoal and channel in the wide Lagune, the long narrow chain of islands that separate them from the main, the wide and busy port just below, the whole city spread out as if on a map, the branching canals, the numerous bridges, the sinuous course of the great canal broken only by the apparently slender arch of the Rialto, flung gracefully across,—the distant suburbs occupying the surrounding islands,—with the low flat shores of Lombardy, the rugged Euganean Hills, and the lofty Tyrolean Alps, appearing beyond on the side of Italy; and, far across the Gulf of Trieste, the blue mountains of Istria rising like distant clouds above the eastern horizon; while, immediately below are seen the busy crowds in St. Mark's Place, "like bees in a hive, or ants in a mole-hill, crawling about without any apparent object," to use the illustration of Mr. Matthews.

Coryate, an old traveller, describes the prospect which is presented to the traveller from the summit of the Campanile, in quaint but glowing terms: "From every side of the same square gallery you have the fairest and goodliest prospect that is (I thinke) in all the worlde. For there hence you see the whole model and forme of the citie, a sight that doth in my opinion farre surpasse all the shewes under the cope of heaven. There you may have a synopsis, that is, a general view of little Christendome (for soe doe many intitle this city of Venice), or rather, of the Jerusalem of Christendome."

The Campanile is interesting as having been the scene

of the astronomical observations made by Galileo while resident at Venice; or, in the words of Mr. Roscoe, its summit is "consecrated to science,—it was the study of the starry Galileo." The connexion which for many years subsisted between that illustrious philosopher and the republic, is highly honourable to the Venetian government; it commenced in 1592, when the senate elected him to the professorship of mathematics in the university of Padua, for the space of six years. At the expiration of that period the senate re-elected him for a similar term, and increased his salary; a second re-election, with a further increase of salary followed, and eventually, he was confirmed in his appointment for life, his annual stipend being at the same time doubled. This occurred after his invention of the telescope; for, as soon as he had completed his first instrument, he repaired with it to Venice, where it excited an extraordinary sensation. During more than a month, Galileo's whole time was employed in exhibiting his instrument to the principal inhabitants of the city, who thronged to his house to satisfy themselves of the truth of the wonderful stories in circulation; and at the end of that time, Leonardo Donato, the reigning doge, caused it to be intimated to him that such a present would not be deemed unacceptable by the senate. Galileo took the hint, and was rewarded for his complaisance by the permanent appointment already mentioned.

An Italian writer, who was a contemporary of Galileo, describes a ludicrous violence which was done to himself, when, with the first telescope which he had succeeded in making, he went up into the tower of St. Mark, at Venice, in the vain hope of being there entirely unmolested. Unluckily, he was seen by some idlers in the street—a crowd soon collected round him, who insisted on taking possession of his instrument; and, handing it one to the other, detained him there for several hours, till their curiosity was satisfied, when he was allowed to return home. Hearing them also inquire eagerly at what inn he lodged, he thought better to quit Venice early the next morning, and prosecute his observations in a less inquisitive neighbourhood.

The loggia, at the foot of the Campanile, was built from the designs of the celebrated Sansovino, whose genius has added so much beauty to the Piazza di S. Marco. The edifice is of the Corinthian order, ornamented with very rich columns, and with four niches, in each of which stands a bronze statue of the size of life, and executed with the greatest skill. It was the original intention of the architect that the loggia should extend all round the tower, so as to form a perfect base to it, and not be confined, as at present, to one of the fronts only. The marble of which the loggia is built is allowed to be of great beauty and rarity. Evelyn praises the "brasse statues and figures of stone" as "the work of some rare artist." Most undoubtedly, Sansovino is entitled to the appellation.

THE PALAZZO BARBARIGO, OR TITIAN'S HOUSE.

"AMONG the few splendid examples of the felicitous career of genius," says Mr. Roscoe, "is recorded that of the master-painter of his country,—the first colourist in the world,—the great Titian. He was the architect of his own fortunes, invested with noble titles, the resident of a palace, attended by an almost princely retinue from court to court; the honoured companion of monarchs, and the envy of their courtiers. What is still rarer, he maintained the high reputation and dignity he had acquired during a long and laborious life, up to its close."

The edifice in which this celebrated man passed the latter years of his life is situated on the Grand Canal; it usually attracts the notice of the ordinary tourist, and always excites the enthusiastic reverence of every lover of the arts. It was formerly the palace of the Barbarigo family; and many of the chambers are filled with portraits of doges and cardinals who sprung from that stock. But the apartment most interesting is the painting-room of Titian, in which he is supposed to have executed some of his finest works, and which is said to be preserved exactly in the state in which he left it. It is hung round with pictures,—some of them by painters who lived before himself, but others, the productions of his own inimitable pencil, such as the Magdalen, and the Salvator Mundi (so frequently seen in prints) and an unfinished sketch of St. Sebastian, on which he was employed at the time of his death. It has been mentioned as a fact which might be interesting to artists, that this room has a southern aspect.

Titian was born in the year 1477, at the little town of Cadore, then comprised within the territory possessed by the Venetians, on the continent of Italy. He was descended from the family of the Vecelli,—a name of some repute and antiquity, and his proper appellation would be Tiziano Vecellio, or Tiziano de' Vecelli, though agreeably to the Italian custom, he has been commonly spoken of by his Christian name. About the year 1495, he first resorted to the city of Venice, where he rose rapidly to a position of eminence which was productive to him of both fame and emolument. As his reputation increased he obtained commissions from the republic;—to him, in concert with Tintoretto and Paul Veronese, were intrusted the design and execution of that first brilliant series of historical pictures which encircled the hall of the Great Council. The reward of Titian was an appointment to the office of *La Senseria* (the Brokerage) in the *Fondaca de' Tedeschi* (store-house of the Germans); the street-front of which had been already painted in fresco by his own hand, as had the water-façade by that of Giorgioni. This building, which stands on the Grand Canal, near the Rialto, was originally the residence of the Signory; it was afterwards granted as a commercial dépôt to German merchants, whence it takes its name, and is now used as a custom-house. The original mansion was destroyed in the great fire of 1514; and it was on the occasion of its being rebuilt that Giorgioni and Titian painted the exterior; when the former, jealous of the praise bestowed on his rival, renounced all intercourse with him.

The patent by which Titian held his appointment was conceived in a truly mercantile spirit; for it bound him to paint the portrait of every doge who succeeded during his life-time, for eight crowns a head, to be paid by the sovereign himself. To this notable agreement we are indebted for the portraits of four doges, who were chosen in 1538, 1545, 1553, and 1554. On the accession of Lorenzo Priuli, in 1556, Titian, then in his seventy-ninth year, discontinued the task. He was always treated with the highest distinction by the government; even in his life-time,—“a season at which gratitude is often wanting to desert,”—when, in 1535, the republic was arming against the Turks, and a poll-tax was levied on her citizens for the replenishment of the treasury, by an edict not less honourable to herself than to the individuals whom it concerned, special exceptions were made in favour of “Tiziano Vecelli, and Giacompo Sansovino, on account of their rare excellence.” When, at length, in 1576, in his ninety-ninth year, he fell a victim, not to any ordinary disorder, but to the plague, he was excepted from the rule which denied the rites of sepulture to those who so died. He was interred in the Church *de' Frari*, somewhere near the altar on the right-hand; owing to the confusion of the times, occasioned by the pestilence, the precise spot is not known. Its neighbourhood was originally marked by a simple but impressive inscription, which may be paralleled with our own celebrated epitaph “O Rare Ben Jonson,” in Westminster Abbey; it is said to have run thus: *Qui giace il gran Tiziano*,—“Here lies the great Titian;” but for this the later Venetians have substituted a jingling distich, which has destroyed all the majesty of the inscription.

The works of Titian are to be found in abundance all over Venice. His most celebrated production, as many think it—or, as some say, the finest picture in the world,—“The Martyrdom of St. Peter,” is to be seen in the Church of *SS. Giovanni e Paolo*,—St. John and St. Paul. “It fills the mind without an effort,” says a modern critic, “for it contains all the mighty world of landscape and history, grandeur and breadth of form, with the richest depth of colouring,—an expression characteristic—powerful, that cannot be mistaken,—conveying the scene at the moment; a masterly freedom, and unerring truth of execution, and a subject as original as it is stately and romantic. It is the foremost of Titian's productions, and exhibits the most extraordinary specimen of his powers.” It was painted originally for the fraternity to which the Church belonged, and they ventured once to sell it for the sum of 18,000 crowns; the ready arm of the Ten instantly interposed, annulled the bargain on pain of death, and retained the picture in the church which it still adorns.

While Titian resided at Venice he possessed another residence, in that part of the city which overlooks Murano, the most frequented of its suburbs in Summer. There, and sometimes at the houses of Arétino and Sansovino, he was accustomed to sup with his friends, among whom he counted some of the most distinguished literary characters of the

period; and these evenings passed agreeably away in pleasant discourse or in learned and philosophical discussions. "In the letters of Aretino and others," says Mr. Roscoe, "we are presented with abundant details respecting these social and learned conferences; of the individuals who composed them; the exquisite wines and viands they afforded, with the aid of distant friends whose frequent presents were the best proof of the estimation in which they held the illustrious artist, and the terrible pen of Aretino and his companions." He speaks constantly of "our grand Titian," whom in one of his letters he admirably describes as "the soul of colours," at the same time calling Sansovino "the breath of marbles." Another appellation which he applies to Titian is that of *compare*, or "gossip," when he writes thus:

"We are all eagerly expecting you to-night at supper. Sansovino will certainly be there, and also that gentleman who talks so much.—December, Venice, 1546."

In another letter to Titian, he says,—"A brace of pheasants, and I know not what else, are expecting you to supper this evening. There will also be the Signora Angiola Zaffetta, and myself. So come, in order that by continually keeping ourselves alive, we may keep old age, that spy of old death, at a respectable distance. Come quickly, therefore, and if Anichino like to lend you his company, bring him; he will be most welcome.—December, Venice, 1547."

THE INQUISITION OF STATE.

..... A strange mysterious power was there
Moving throughout, subtle invisible
And universal as the air they breathed;
A power that never slumber'd, never pardon'd,
All eye, all ear, nowhere, and everywhere;
Entering the closet and the sanctuary,
Most present when least thought of—nothing dropp'd
In secret when the heart was on the lips,
Nothing in feverish sleep, but instantly
Observed and judged,—a power, that if but glanced at
In casual converse, be it where it might,
The speaker lower'd at once his eyes, his voice,
And pointed upwards as to God in heaven!

THE associations which attach to this terrible tribunal, are more fearfully interesting than any others connected with Venice and its long eventful history. It is only of late years that we have possessed any certain information on the subject of its origin, its constitution, or the statutes which regulated its proceedings; for, till the researches of Daru unfolded some precious manuscripts contained in the Royal Library at Paris, everything relating to it was wrapped in impenetrable darkness. By Venetian writers it has been "approached with wary steps, and quitted with trembling haste." Their chief civil historian speaks briefly of its mysterious constitution, of the veneration due to it from all citizens, of the breach of duty which any attempt to penetrate its obscurity would involve, and concludes by declaring "with sincerity and simplicity, to the glory of this august tribunal, that if Rome, so admirable in the rest of her polity, had established a similar magistracy, she would still exist secure from the corruptions which occasioned her dissolution."

The Inquisition of State was established by a decree of the Grand Council, bearing date the 16th of June, 1454, by which the Council of Ten, in consequence of the difficulty found in assembling their members with sufficient promptitude on every occasion on which their services might be requisite, are authorized to choose three "Inquisitors of State,"—two from their own body, and one from the Council of the Doge; the former, who were styled *I Neri*, or "The Black," from the colour of their robes of ceremony—exercising their new functions for a year; and the latter, who was styled *Il Rosso*, or "The Red,"—enjoying them for only eight months,—these two periods being those of their respective original councillorships.

The powers granted by the Council of Ten are briefly stated in a second decree of their own, passed three days afterwards, by which the Inquisitors were invested with all the plenary authority possessed by their electors, over every person, of what degree soever, in the republic, be he citizen, noble, magistrate, ecclesiastic, or even one of the Ten themselves; over all individuals, in a word, who should in any way expose themselves to merited punishment. The penalties which they might inflict were left solely to their own discretion, and extended to death, either by public or secret execution. Each member, singly,

might take all steps preparatory to judgment, but a definitive sentence could be pronounced only by their unanimous voices. The terrific dungeons, whether under the leaden roofs (*I Piombi*), or beneath the level of the canals, in the hollowed walls of the palace (*I Pozzi*), were placed at their disposal; they held the keys of the treasury of the Ten, without being accountable for the sums which they might draw from it. All governors, commanders, and ambassadors on foreign stations, were enjoined implicit obedience to their mandates; they were permitted to frame their own statutes, with the power of altering, rescinding, or adding to them from time to time; and, effectually to guard against the chief hazard by which their secrecy might be violated, no *Papalista*, that is, no one who had an ecclesiastic among his near connexions, or was at all interested in the court of Rome, was eligible as an Inquisitor of State, even although he might belong to the Ten.

The rules which the Inquisitors laid down for the guidance of their proceedings in the discharge of their extensive functions, are to be found in their statutes. "These decrees," says a writer in the *Family Library*, "are the only ordinances reduced to writing, in which a legislative body has ever dared to erect a code upon the avowed basis of perfidy and assassination. Never yet did the principle of Ill establish so free a traffic for the interchange of crime,—so unrestricted a mass in which mankind might barter their iniquity; never was the committal of certain and irremediable evil so fully authorized for the chance of questionable and ambiguous good; never was every generous emotion of moral instinct,—every accredited maxim of social duty, so debased and subjugated to the baneful yoke of an assumed political expediency. The statutes of the Venetian Inquisition of State, now exposed to the general eye, exceed every other product of human wickedness, in premeditated, deliberate, systematic, unmixed, undissembled, flagitiousness."

STATUTES OF THE INQUISITION OF STATE.

THESE statutes were first given to the world by Daru in his *History of Venice*, in which he has printed them in the original Venetian, and accompanied it by a French translation. A sufficiently ample account of their leading provisions may be found in the *Sketches from Venetian History* contained in the *Family Library*, from which we have abridged our notice. The code was entirely written in the autograph of one of the Inquisitors, and was deposited in a casket, of which each of the three magistrates, by turns, kept the key. In the outset, it declared that every process of the tribunal was for ever to be preserved secret, and that no inquisitor should betray that he was such by any outward sign, but everywhere constantly maintain the character of a merely private individual; since the advantage with which the state could be served was considered to be strictly proportionate to the mystery in which this tribunal was enveloped. Hence its citations, arrests, and other instruments, were to be issued in the name of the Ten, its examinations conducted, its judgments pronounced, by the mouths of secretaries. Even if an accused party after arrest should escape condemnation, (a rare event,) he was to learn his acquittal and release not by a direct sentence, but by a surly rebuke from his gaoler,—"What are you doing there? out with you," was the greeting with which the turnkey entered the cell of a prisoner about to be restored to liberty. Spies were to be procured with the utmost diligence from every class, artisans, citizens, nobles, and religious; and their rewards were to be adjusted in such manner as might rather perpetually excite, than absolutely satiate expectation. The nice sensitiveness of honour which this "Judas-band" might be supposed to cherish, was respected with peculiar delicacy. Should they be taunted by any one in terms which might impair their zeal or prevent the addiction of others to similar employment, or should they even be called "Spies of the State Inquisitors," the person so naming them was to be arrested, tortured, till he revealed the method by which he obtained this dangerous knowledge, and punished afterwards at the discretion of the tribunal.

The regulations of the Inquisition of State may be referred to two great classes, those which related to foreign ambassadors resident at Venice, and Venetian ambassadors resident in foreign countries; and secondly, regulations of domestic polity. The numerous provisions respecting the observation of foreign ministers were singularly precise; and the great object appears to have been the

prevention of intercourse between them and the native nobility. Four, at least, of the spies, each unknown to the other, and all selected from the inferior classes, were to watch every ambassador resident in Venice. Their first attempt was always to be made upon the secretaries, to whom a large monthly stipend might be promised solely for the revelation of any secret commerce between their masters and a noble; the fittest persons through whom these overtures could be made were Monks and Jews, both of whom, as the statutes say, gain admission everywhere. If an ordinary spy proved insufficient to penetrate the diplomatic secrets, some Venetian condemned to banishment was instructed to take asylum in the ambassador's palace; immunity from the pursuit of government being promised for the time, and a future recompense also proportionate to his discoveries. The asylum in the above instance was manifestly a pretext; but as the privilege was really allowed by the law of nations, it was often claimed in earnest; and in these cases the Inquisitors resolved that if the offence for which the criminal sought refuge were slight, all knowledge of his hiding-place should be dissembled; but if of graver hue, every means should be taken to arrest, or, if these were unsuccessful, to assassinate him. If the fugitive were a noble, however trifling might be his fault, he should be instantly assassinated.

Whenever a foreign ambassador should solicit pardon for an exile, due care was to be taken to examine into the character of the party: and if he proved to be of mean condition, loose morals, and narrow circumstances, (how well did these children of the tempter understand what spirits were most open to their wiles!) it was probable that he might be gained as a spy. Propositions therefore, should be made to him to *superintend* the establishment of the ambassador, to whom, on account of the favour conferred on him, he would be likely to obtain familiar access; and whom, accordingly, under an appearance of gratitude, he might the more readily betray. If any noble should report to the Inquisitors proposals made to him by an ambassador, he should be authorized to continue the treasonable negotiation until the intermediate agent could be seized in the very act: then, provided it were not the ambassador himself or the secretary of legation, but some minor agent, of whose quality and person ignorance might be pretended, he was to be immediately drowned.

Especially favourable opportunities for observation might be found, it was said, whenever an ambassador was making choice of a residence. It was already an established law, that if a foreign minister negotiated with a nobleman for his house, the owner must not complete his bargain without first obtaining permission from the Ten, who prescribed to him the fit method of conducting his treaty, without holding the slightest forbidden intercourse with the stranger. But for still greater security, each inquisitor now resolved to examine separately, and with the utmost particularity, every house intended as the abode of a foreign minister; in order to determine whether any secret communication could be established with the adjoining tenements, and whether its roof were level with those of its neighbours, so that persons might pass from one to the other. If such were the case, and the house next door were occupied by a noble owner, he was to be advised to quit, and to let it to some one of an inferior class; and, "if he has a grain of good sense," says the statute, "he will understand and obey." If a noble only rented the adjoining premises, he was at once to be commanded to dislodge, and his place was to be supplied by a spy, the expenses of whose establishment, if necessary, should be defrayed by the Tribunal.

The regulations of domestic polity were conceived in a like spirit. Every morning, after a sitting of the Great Council, the Inquisitors were to assemble and discuss the fortunes, habits, and characters of such nobles as had been appointed to any offices of state. Two spies, mutually unknown, were to be attached to any of those upon whom suspicion might rest, to follow all their steps, and to report all their actions. If those emissaries should fail to discover anything of moment, a more dexterous person was to be selected to visit the noble by night, and to offer him a bribe from some foreign ambassador, for a betrayal of the secrets of the Council. Even if he withstood that trial, but did not immediately denounce the overture, he was to be registered in a *Libro de Sospetti*, (or "Book of the Suspected,") and ever afterwards to be carefully observed. If any noble, not under sentence of exile, should enter into the service of a foreign court, he was to be recalled home; on disobedience, his relations were to be imprisoned; after two

months' contumacy, he was to be assassinated wherever he could be found; or that attempt failing, his name was to be erased from the Golden Book.

Should any noble while speaking in the Senate or the Grand Council, wander from his subject into matters deemed prejudicial to the state, he was to be immediately interrupted by one of the Chiefs of the Ten. In case the orator disputed this authority, or said anything injurious to it, no notice was to be taken at the moment; but he was to be arrested on the close of the sitting, tried according to his offence, and, if direct means of conviction were unobtainable, to be put to death privately. As freedom of debate in the legislative bodies was thus narrowly limited, it can be no matter of surprise that restraint was imposed upon conversation elsewhere. A noble guilty of indiscretion of speech was to be twice admonished; on the third offence, to be prohibited from appearing in the public streets or councils for two years: if he disobeyed, or, if he relapsed after the two years, he was to be drowned as incorrigible.

Such were some of the leading regulations of this celebrated tribunal, which for so long a time exercised a despotic sway over the lives and fortunes of the Venetians, and filled their minds with unspeakable dread. In its operation the horrible system was but too effective; its secrecy and despatch excited the wonder of every citizen of the republic, and taught him to veil his sentiments with the utmost caution, for he well knew that

... Let him in the midnight air indulge
A word, a thought, against the laws of Venice,
And in that hour he vanished from the earth.

Bishop Burnet tells us that when he was at Venice, he was assured by a person of eminence, "that there was a poisoner-general in Venice that had a salary, and was employed by the inquisitors to despatch those against whom a public proceeding would make too great a noise. This," he adds, "I could not believe, though my author protested that the brother of one who was solicited to accept of the embassy discovered it to him." The existence of the office is much more probable (especially as poison was one of the weapons of the Inquisition) than that any one should have been solicited to accept it, and have babbled about it afterwards with impunity.

THE BROGLIO.

The *Broglia* is one of the many objects to be found in the city of Venice, which derive their main interest from their connexion with the past. The term was originally applied to the arcade which runs under the ducal palace, and which used in former times to be distinguished as "the walk in which the nobility tread:" we have already given a general view of it in p. 249, and a more particular view of that part of it which opens on the piazza, in p. 253, of our eighth volume. A traveller who visited Italy towards the latter end of the seventeenth century, thus describes it. "The *Broglia* is the place where the nobles walk, who sometimes take one and sometimes the other side, according to the convenience of the sun or shade, and no one else is admitted to mix with them on that side of the walk, but the other is free for every body. They are so nice in this point, that when a young nobleman comes to the age which qualifies him for the council, and to take the robe, four noblemen of his friends introduce him the first day into the *Broglia*, and if any nobleman is excluded from the council, he is no longer admitted into the *Broglia*." To such an extent, indeed, were these distinctions carried, that separate walks were conventionally set apart for the different classes among the nobles themselves.

It was on this walk that the senators were accustomed to discuss the affairs of the republic, and to canvass the conduct of the government, as far as they dared, indeed, to canvass so delicate a subject. It has been severely described as the Exchange of the Venetian nobility, in which they brought their votes to market; and *far Broglia* with them is said to have answered precisely to the commercial phrase, to be on *change*, with us. There have been various explanations of the origin of the name,—some of them very recondite; the popular derivation *imbrogliare*,—to embroil, to cabal,—very justly characterized this mart of corruption. "I am apt to think," remarks Bishop Burnet, "that broils, brouillons, and embroillments, are all derived from the agitations that are managed in those walks." The Inquisitors of State seem to have been somewhat of the same opinion; for, among the measures to which they had recourse with the view of checking "indiscretions of

speech," on the part of the nobles, was that of ordering their patrician spies sedulously to watch all members of their own class on the Broglio, particularly in the early morning hours, which were judged to be most favourable for these observations, because the promenade being less frequented at that time, greater license, it was thought, might then be hazarded.

In no state of society have the distinctions of rank ever been more carefully and scrupulously preserved than in that which subsisted under the ancient republican government of Venice. The nobles of Venice were themselves conventionally arranged in four classes. The first class comprised scarcely twenty-five families; the most distinguished of them were the descendants of the twelve tribunes by whom the first doge had been elected in the year 697.—*Gli Elettorali*,—or the Electorals, as they were styled. To these were annexed four families, whose representatives, in conjunction with those of the above-mentioned twelve, had signed an instrument for the foundation of the Abbey of San Giorgio Maggiore in the year 800, and six other families whose claim was admitted without hesitation; there were two or three besides, whose claim was more or less contested. The whole number of nobles, in the four classes, seldom exceeded twelve hundred; their names were inscribed in a register called the *Libro d'Oro*, the Golden Book, which was burnt by the French in 1797, at the foot of the newly-planted "Tree of Liberty."

Besides the distribution of the nobles into classes, there was yet a more summary mode of distinguishing them. The rich were termed *I signori*, and the poor who formed two-thirds of the whole body, and who inhabited the cheap quarter of San Barnabo, *i Barnaboti*. Or retaining *Barnaboti* for the last, the wealthiest were named in a sort of vulgar language *Sanguè Blù*, or *Sanguè Colombiù*, Blue blood, or Pigeon's blood; and the moderately rich, *Morel di mezo*, middle piece. It was the policy of the government to discourage the pride of birth as much as possible, when it led to comparisons which might occasion disunion among the nobility; and one of the ordinances of the Inquisition directed itself with great severity against such as disparaged their brethren by boasting of their own superior antiquity. The spies were warned to report all expressions of this tendency; the first offence was punished with six months' imprisonment in the *Piombi*, those fatal dungeons under the leads of the Ducal Palace, from which few returned alive; for the second, the indiscreet babbler was to be drowned secretly. There is an anecdote upon this subject related by a French writer, which, as is suggested, may have been invented for the sake of the jest which it contains, but which, nevertheless, well illustrates the spirit of the Venetian government on this point. One of the *Da Ponte* family, in a dispute with a gentleman named *Canale*, boasted that the *Ponti* (Bridges) were much above the *Canali*, (Canals); his antagonist replied that the *Canali* were in being long before the *Ponti*. The senate interfered and informed the one that it possessed power to fill up the *Canals*, and the other that it could knock down the *Bridges*.

The nobles of Venice preserved their privilege of exclusively occupying the Broglio to the last days of the republic; but it vanished, with the whole fabric of the ancient despotism, soon after the appearance of the French. "St. Mark's," says Forsyth, writing in 1802, "is much altered since the late events. I saw none of those singularities, those official costumes, that mummery, that masking, which used to enliven the scene. Men of all ranks associate very promiscuously under the arcades, free from the old republican distinctions."

GONDOLAS.

THE idea of the gondola is inseparably connected with the name of Venice. It is the universal vehicle of the city; for where it is scarcely possible to walk a hundred yards in any one direction, without having to mount the steps of a bridge, horses and carriages would be useless. This boat is a sort of canoe, about thirty-three feet in length and four in breadth; the head is formed of polished iron, protruding forward like a swan's neck, and the stern has a wooden beak, not so elevated as that of the head. In the middle is a low covered apartment, fitted up, like a carriage, with glass windows and sun-blinds, and cushioned seats for four persons; behind this stands the gondolier, who rows with one oar and keeps time with one foot. The whole of the gondola, with the exception of the steel prow and some

brass ornaments, is black; for, in former times, the Republic, among other sumptuary provisions, enacted a law to restrain the extravagance of the nobles, prescribing the size, form, and colour in which the gondola is still seen; "and now," to use the words of a modern writer, "if the law be not repealed, the Venetians are too poor to alter the established mode." At one time the Venetian noble had always six or seven gondolas of his own, which were fixed to high poles before the gates of his palace, and rowed by servants in liveries; few individuals have now more than two or three, and the greater part of those which the traveller sees about the city are let on hire.

"The gondolas, being entirely black," says the late Sir J. E. Smith, "have a very hearse-like appearance; but the gay liveries of the rowers, and the elegant company within, soon chase away all funereal ideas. Nothing can be more graceful than the attitude of these gondoliers, as they urge their light barks over the waves, skimming the surface of the water with the rapidity of a swallow, and scarcely seeming to touch it more; while their bright prows of polished iron gleam in the sunshine and glitter in the rippling waves. They stand on a very narrow part of the boat, slightly elevated like the ridge of a house, and varying in its horizontal inclination every moment, on which they are supported only by the close application of their feet through their shoes, a firm position of their legs, and accurate poising of the body, the upper part of which, with the arms alone, is in motion."

In former times, when Venice was in her "high and palmy state," her *gondolieri* were a much more interesting class of men than they now are, they were remarkable for a ready wit, which often displayed itself with a freedom characteristic of their gay and careless disposition. Even so late as the close of the last century they retained their peculiarities; and when the French erased the scriptural legend on the Gospel held by the Lion of St. Mark, and substituted those vague catch-words of Revolution, "the rights of man and of citizenship," it was the remark of one of the gondoliers, that "the lion, for the first time, had turned over a new leaf." But that for which the *gondolieri* were particularly distinguished, "was the practice which they had acquired of chanting the verses of Tasso. "Hark!" says a female traveller of the last century, "while I am writing, I hear some voices under my windows answering each other upon the Grand Canal. It is—it is the gondolieri sure enough; they are at this moment singing to an odd sort of tune, but in no unmusical manner, the Flight of Erminia from Tasso's 'Jerusalem.' Oh, how pretty! how pleasing! This wonderful city realizes the most romantic ideas ever formed of it, and defies imagination to escape her various powers of enslaving it."

The practice has almost wholly ceased at the present day; there may be some old gondoliers who remember the verses, and can execute the chant, but the task is never voluntarily undertaken. Sir John Hobhouse notices its decline in describing an excursion to the Lido with two singers, one of whom was a carpenter and the other a gondolier; "the former placed himself at the prow, the latter at the stern of the boat. A little after leaving the quay of the Piazzetta they began to sing, and continued their exercise until we arrived at the island. They gave us, among other essays, the death of Clorinda, and the palace of Armida, and did not sing the Venetian but the Tuscan verses. The carpenter, however, who was the cleverer of the two, and was frequently obliged to prompt his companion, told us that he could translate the original. He added, that he could sing almost three hundred stanzas, but had not spirits to learn any more, or to sing what he already knew; a man must have idle time on his hands to acquire or to repeat, 'and,' said the poor fellow, 'look at my clothes and at me,—I am starving.'"

A similar account is given by Mr. Stewart Rose. "It is now," he says, "almost as difficult to find one who can sing a Venetian ballad, as one who can chant verses from Tasso. This poet has been translated into all, or most of all, the Italian dialects, but with most success into that of this state, ministering matter for their music to the gondoliers of former times. But 'the songs of other years' have died away. I requested one the other day from a man who was said to be amongst the last depositories of them, but found I had touched a tender string in asking him for a song of Sion. He shook his head and told me, that 'in times like these he had no heart to sing.' This boat music was destined for the silence and solitude of the

night; but it should seem that some of our countrymen entertain very different notions on this subject, as I saw lately a sober-looking Englishman, with his wife and child, embarked on the Grand Canal at mid-day, with two violins and a drum. Yet they did not look like people who would have paraded Bond-street with fiddles in a barouche."

A subject so interesting as this practice and its decline has not escaped the classical pen of Mr. Rogers:—

..... Once, we could not err,
(It was before an old Palladian house,
As between night and day we floated by,)
A gondolier lay singing; and he sang
As in the time when Venice was herself,
Of Tancred and Erminia. On our oars
We rested; and the verse was verse divine!
We could not err.—Perhaps he was the last,—
For none took up the strain, none answer'd him;
And when he ceased, he left upon my ear,
A something like the dying voice of Venice!

COMMERCE.

FROM the period when Venice came into the possession of Austria, down to 1830, it is said to have been the policy of the government to encourage Trieste in preference to that city; and the circumstance of Trieste being a free port, gave her a very decided advantage over her neighbour. But in 1830, Venice was made a free port, and has since fully participated in every privilege conferred upon Trieste. Notwithstanding this circumstance, the latter continues to preserve the ascendancy, and though a revival of trade has taken place at Venice, it is not so great as might have been, and, indeed, was anticipated. "The truth is," says Mr. Macculloch, "that, except in so far as she is the entrepôt of the adjoining provinces of Lombardy, Venice has no considerable natural advantage as a trading city; and her extraordinary prosperity during the middle ages is more to be ascribed to the comparative security enjoyed by the inhabitants, and to their success in engrossing the principal share of the commerce of the Levant than to any other circumstances." There are no means of ascertaining the precise amount of its present trade. The shipping be-

longing to the port in 1832 is said to have comprised 211 vessels, of the tonnage of 30,049 tons, and 1,760 men; and besides these, it is estimated that 16,000 of the population subsist by fishing near the port and over the Lagoon.

The rapid decline of Venice since its extinction as an independent state, has given rise to many sinister forebodings in regard to its future fate. "Several of the channels across the Lagune," says Simond, "are choking up for want of cleaning; the Brenta, the Piave, and other streams being forced to carry their earthy sediment down into the sea by the lateral embankments which confine their waters. Venice will in time be a ruin, in a pestilential marsh, and already it is subject to fevers. In Summer, the deaths, upon an average, are twelve a day, on a population reduced to one hundred thousand. Yet the name of Venice, a splendid shadow, will long continue to attract strangers, when its population shall have dwindled to a few fishermen, and when none of its palaces shall have a roof left." The prediction of Mr. Rose, is perhaps more melancholy still:—"All recollections of ancient Venice," he says, "may be considered as things saved from the waters. The customs of the city have changed; her ports and channels are filling up, and her palaces are crumbling into ruins. Yet a little, and Venice will be a baby-Babylon, with the substitution of the gull for the bittern, and the porpoise for the fox."

We cannot more appropriately conclude our remarks upon this subject than with Mr. Wordsworth's *Sonnet on the Extinction of the Venetian Republic*:

Once did she hold the gorgeous East in fee,
And was the safeguard of the West; the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth
Venice, the eldest child of Liberty,—
She was a maiden city, bright and free.
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse the everlasting sea.
And, what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay:
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life had reached its final day:
Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade
Of that which once was great is passed away.



VIEW OF THE DOGANA AND CHURCH OF S. MARIA DELLA SALUTE.